

# QA2 – FOOD AND BEVERAGE PROCEDURE

## INFORMATION

Our centre will provide children with meals and snacks that are delicious and nutritious. We will store, prepare and serve food according to current food safety and hygiene practices and develop menus in accordance with the best practice guidelines provided by Nutrition Australia.

We will also work to ensure children's meal and snack times are happy, social occasions that promote healthy eating habits and incorporate a variety of learning opportunities.

## RESPONSIBILITIES

All team members, visitors, students and volunteers must comply with this procedure.

## PROCEDURE

### MEAL TIMES

Educators will:

- Create a relaxed, home-like atmosphere
- Utilise the mealtime opportunity to engage in, model and promote social interactions and language development
- Ensure food safety standards and hygiene requirements are met
- Positively support and encourage children to make healthy food choices
- Model positive, healthy eating choices and habits
- Allow children to eat outside of routine as required
- Ensure children can access drinking water at all times, not just during meal times
- Consider food allergies at all times
- Provide cutlery and utensils that are developmentally suitable
- Use tongs or serving tools when sharing from a platter
- Not allow children to share individual eating or drinking utensils, or take food from another child's plate
- Ensure children wash and dry their hands before and after they eat
- Always use individual cutlery for each child

### FOOD STORAGE AND PREPARATION

Staff will:

- Follow the Food Safety Program
- Properly store food in the fridge and ensure food belonging to children with allergies is stored separately within the fridge.
- Measure and record the fridge temperature daily, ensuring it is 5°C or below at all times.
- Ensure adequate fridge space is provided.

- Not store insulated bags in the fridge; all items must be removed.
- Wash and dry hands before preparing and serving food.
- Maintain a clean environment for food preparation and consumption.
- Wash fruit and raw vegetables before serving.
- Heat food or milk once only.
- Not keep or reheat any leftovers.

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## **MENUS AND NUTRITION**

Many children in long day care may receive 50% to 70% of their food intake whilst in care therefore it is vital that in centres that provide meals, food is nutritionally appropriate. It is also important to offer children opportunities to experience a variety of food from other cultures. In our centres that provide meals, we will review our menus each season to ensure variety and seasonal foods are offered. We will also prepare foods in different ways to reflect the diverse backgrounds of the children attending the centre.

Menus will be clearly visible to families, and if a change is made to the menu, families will be advised of the substitution made. We welcome and encourage families to provide input into menu planning, and to share their thoughts and feedback around the menu being offered.

We also welcome and support mothers who wish to breastfeed their child whilst at the centre. Please speak to your Nominated Supervisor, or room educator, for further information and assistance.

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## **FOOD ALLERGIES AND SPECIAL DIETARY REQUIREMENTS**

It is critical that families provide detailed and specific information regarding food allergies and special dietary requirements at the time of a child's enrolment, or as soon as possible when their child's needs change. If a child is at risk of anaphylaxis due to a food allergy, please refer to the Medical Condition's Procedure for further direction and advice.

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## **FOOD FROM HOME & BIRTHDAY CAKES**

Birthday cakes may be provided by parents, and it is encouraged that they be store bought so that all ingredients are listed. An ingredient list must be provided for any food items provided by families before serving to the children to allow for the checking of allergies or intolerances.

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## **FUSSY EATERS & ALTERNATIVES**

From time to time, children's interest in foods change and they can refuse food or suddenly eat food that they have previously disliked.

Children will first be offered the planned menu and encouraged to eat the meal with their friends.

If a child refuses the meal, then an alternative will be prepared and offered.

Educators will have a discussion with families around food preferences and their individual child; the child's needs and preferences will be supported while trying to encourage the child to try new foods.

At no time, will the child ever be made to eat when they don't want to eat or will food be withheld from children.

## CULTURAL &/OR DISABILITY SENSITIVITIES

All cultural and/or disability needs will be discussed with families and accommodated by making modifications to our menu or suppliers as necessary or appropriate.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS, REFERENCES AND RESOURCES

Australian Breastfeeding Association. (2019). *Australian Breastfeeding Association*. Retrieved 9 May 2019 from <https://www.breastfeeding.asn.au/>

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Eat for Health. (2019). *Australian Dietary Guidelines*. Retrieved May 9, 2019 from <https://www.eatforhealth.gov.au/guidelines>

Feed Australia (2019). *Feed Australia; A world leading nutritional education and preventative health initiative*. Retrieved 2018 from <https://www.feedaustralia.org.au/>

Food standards Australian New Zealand (2019). *Food Standards Code*. Retrieved 23 April, 2018 from [www.foodstandards.gov.au/code](http://www.foodstandards.gov.au/code)

National Health and Medical Research Council. (2013). *Preventing infectious disease in early childhood education and care services, 5<sup>th</sup> Edn*. Retrieved May 8, 2019 from <https://www.nhmrc.gov.au/sites/default/files/documents/reports/clinical%20guidelines/ch55-staying-healthy.pdf>

## DOCUMENT CONTROL

Date Reviewed	Modifications
June 2019	Created new policy document and format.
February 2020	Minor change after staff review
15 February 2022	Updated birthday cake requirements